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In 344
Housekeepers' Chat

Monday, July 14, 1930

Not for Publication

Subject: "Dish Washing -- Up-to-Date Methods." Menu from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletin available: "Convenient Kitchens."

--ooOoo--

This morning I am going to ask you a very personal question: Do you like to wash dishes? Remember, you're among friends, so you can answer quite frankly. Do you like to wash dishes? Well, did you ever know a woman who actually like to wash dishes? I don't mean dainty little dishwashing -- salad plates and cups and saucers and a saucepan or two. No, I'm talking about the real old-fashioned dishwashing, from thin glass tumblers to thick iron skillets. Greasy skillets, pans with breakfast cereal clinging to them, mixing bowls with hardened egg inside.

However, there are ways of washing pots and pans, yes, even pots and pans, so that dishwashing is not such a discouraging process as some people make it.

Pots and pans aren't such formidable objects, after they have been soaked a while. Put them to soak, as soon as they are emptied. If there's any good fat left in the skillet, pour it out, and save it. Every little bit of thrift helps the vacation fund.

Wipe the greasy pans with a piece of paper, and then fill them with hot water; add a little soap powder or soda to cut the grease, and you'll be surprised how easy they are to clean.

Scrape all the pots and pans before putting them to soak. Use hot water for the sugary dishes, and cold water for the egg and milk dishes. If food is burned on to them, use steel wool or a stiff brush and scouring powder, after the dish has been soaked for a while. Whenever I have time, I wash the pots and pans just before I serve dinner, so that the kitchen won't be such a forbidding place after dinner.

It's a good idea to get rid of the pots and kettles which are no longer any use. Says a friend of mine: "If old cooking utensils, past their period of usefulness, are thrown away, rather than retired to a far corner of the kitchen shelves, the housewife will find her kitchen a more efficient workshop."

"In these days of small kitchens, no shelf or storage space can well be given up as a home for old utensils! The systematic housewife keeps on hand only those in good working order, which she really needs. Others take up valuable room, collect dust, and make extra work at housecleaning time. At least a yearly weeding out of the kitchen utensils will pay. Old or broken utensils, basins, kettles, dippers, and odds-and-ends no longer useful should be discarded.

"The remaining articles can then be arranged for efficiency; those in constant demand every day should be kept near the sink or the range or wherever they are most needed. Knives, spoons, frying pans, kettles, kettle covers, and so forth should be where the cook can put her hands on them quickly."

There -- that's what my friend says, and she ought to know, because she's a specialist on kitchen lore.

By the way, have I told you that my Next-Door Neighbor is going to take a real vacation this year? South America. She's so thrilled and excited that she can hardly settle down to packing her trunk. As I told her the other day, the next time she decides to go to South America, I wish she'd decide a year ahead of time, instead of three weeks. She came over Saturday, almost in tears.

"Stop peel potatoes," she implored, "and listen to me. Besides a passport, I have to have a health certificate for Brazil, a vaccination certificate for Brazil and Uruguay, and police certificates for Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. Imagine, Aunt Sammy, a police certificate!"

"What is a police certificate?" I asked.

"A statement certifying that I am an American citizen in good standing, and that I have no police record. But I have!"

"Have what?"

"Have a police record. I was severely reprimanded once, for walking across the grass down by the U. S. Department of Agriculture building. Do you suppose that will keep me from going to South America?"

"No," I assured her. "It would take more than that to stop you from going to South America. In fact, your disposition being what it is, I doubt whether anything could stop you now."

"Nothing short of a national calamity," murmured my friend. "Listen to this, Aunt Sammy, it sounds too wonderful to be true; 'The voyage to Rio de Janeiro from New York will be an event in your life. Two days at sea A visit to Bermuda's picturesque beauty then again at sea with ten days made for play and pleasure, rest and relaxation, spent under the gorgeous blue canopy that is the southern sky, with the vast expanse of sapphire sea reaching unspoiled to the horizon. Nights of intangible witchery under the Southern Cross the tang of the salt toning your tired nerves..... the trade winds ruffling the South Atlantic ever so gently.'"

"And when we get to Rio -- 'like a fantastic, exotic stage setting, splashed with vermillion, jade-green and pastel-yellow, the panorama of the

harbor of Rio de Janeiro unfolds as your steamer nears the entrance. A sky of delicate blue tints the sea under the bow. Rio is a city out of a dream.....' Then we go on to Santos, and to Montevideo. Do you know that Montevideo means 'I see a mountain'? Montevideo is a city of rose gardens. Listen, Aunt Sammy, to this description of Montevideo: 'The city is a fairyland. Hundreds of varieties of roses, of every conceivable color that roses could come in -- each color with its own private perfume. You walk on roses -- growing in trailing vines there are roses in formal trees, roses in fragrant arbors, roses trained in little towers with lights shining from within magnolia, orange, palm, myrtle trees with roses in them.'

"And from Montevideo to Buenos Aires. Ten days in Buenos Aires -- ten whole days! Do you know that it's winter time now, in Buenos Aires? I must take my winter coat, and a winter dress, and buy a new felt hat. Imagine talking about winter clothes, this hot weather! What are you having for supper, Aunt Sammy?"

"Cold meat and potato salad. Nothing elaborate -- it's too hot to cook today. Won't you stay for supper, and tell us more about your trip to South America?"

"I'd love to," said my Neighbor. "I'll run over home and get a box of blackberries I meant to have for dessert. I have some currant jelly too -- made that last week. Would you like to have a glass?"

"Sure -- and a little extra butter. Don't believe I have quite enough for supper."

We ate supper on the cool, shady back porch, the while my Neighbor told us more about her cruise down the eastern coast of South America. She can't talk about anything else now -- but I don't blame her.

For supper, we had Cold Sliced Ham; Potato Salad; Toasted Rolls; Currant Jelly; Iced Tea; Blackberries and Cream.

Tomorrow: "Fighting the Flea."
